From Conflict to Communion: Ministry

Discussion Leader:
Pat Farrell - St. James
Definition of Ministry

• Combination of Baptism, Word, Sacrament
  – Is witnessed in service to the people of God.
“You are a chosen race, God’s own people, a royal priesthood, a priestly kingdom.” 1 Peter 2:9

Lutherans and Catholics agree that all those baptized “in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...” are baptized into Christ, and, therefore His priesthood.
Ministry of the Word and Sacraments

• Fundamental Task of Ordained
  – Proclaim the Word and administer the Sacraments
• Public service to Word as commissioned
  By God
-We agree

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Similarities in Ordained Ministry - Pastors/Priests

- Lutheran
  - All Christians are “priests”; not all ministers
  - Ministerial call by God
  - Seminary training
  - All clergy are called Pastor through the Rite of Ordination.
    - Confers office
    - Field of work
  - Called to Ministry by a Parish or community

- Catholic
  - Agree
  - Agree
  - Agree
  - All Pastors are Priests through Rite of Ordination.
  - Agree that they hold office through ordination
  - Agree that field of work comes from ordination
  - Preside over a particular parish or local community
  - Local Bishop appoints pastor/priests

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Differences in Ordained Ministry – Pastor/Priest

• **Lutheran**
  - Title by Ordination - Pastor
  - Non-Sacramental
  
  - Includes women

• **Catholic**
  - Title by Ordination - Priest
  - Sacramental
  - Sacrament of Holy Orders must be conferred by Roman Catholic Bishop
  - Three levels of ordination
    - Bishop (requires 3 other Bishops)
    - Priest
    - Deacon
  
  - Does not include women

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Similarities in Office of Bishop

• Lutheran
  – Bishops have regional responsibilities
  – Teach and preach God’s Word and administer the sacraments
  – Ensure good order in the church
  – Supervise those called to ministry
  – Participate in the consecration of new bishops

• Catholic – Very similar
  • Sacramental
    – Ordination and Confirmation
  • Responsibilities to World-wide church through Pope

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Differences in Office of the Bishop

- **Lutheran**
  - Consecrated
  - Participate in ordination of Bishops - 3 needed to ordain new Bishop
  - Pastors

- **Catholic**
  - Ordination
    - 3 Bishops needed to ordain new Bishop (same)
    - Priesthood
    - Diaconate
  - Confirmation
  - Side note; Some many receive Title of Cardinal

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Similarities in Diaconate

• Lutheran
  Ministry of Word and Service

• Catholic
  • Ministry at the Altar
  • Ministry of the Word
  • Ministry of Service
Differences in Diaconate

- **Lutheran Deacon** – consecrated
  - Ministers of Word and Service

- **Catholic Deacon** – Ordained
  - **Transitional deacons**: deacons preparing for the priesthood.
  - **Permanent deacons**: Can be married. Must be male.
    - Primary: Ministry of the Word and service
    - Perform some, but not all priestly functions:
    - Baptize and Witness Marriage

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Non-ordained Roman Catholic Ministers

• Lay ecclesial Ministry (similar to Lutheran Deacon)
  – Requires advance degree in ministry
  – Formation at seminary level
  – Rigorous examination by board
  – Call from Bishop
  – Non-ordination ceremony
  – Includes women
Lay Ministers

• Lutheran
  – Perform many liturgical functions
    • Proclaim non-gospel scripture
    • Serve as Eucharistic ministers
    • Service: visit sick and infirm, religious education, etc

• Catholic
  • Same

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Origin of Lutheran Ordination

• Lutheran choices: traditional ordination or Reformation preaching of justification

• Catholic Bishops would not allow evangelical preaching, so Lutheran pastors began to ordain candidates.

• In fact they waited until 1535 to organize own ordinations. Lutherans would have preferred system as it existed if the bishops had allowed pastors to preach the Gospel on the basis of justification by grace through faith.

• Ordinations took place in Wittenberg

• Laying on of hands and prayer to Holy Spirit
Catholics thinking on Lutheran ordination: lacks fullness of sacramental sign.

Because: Lutheran bishops do not follow apostolic succession as understood by Catholic church.

Catholic understanding: ordination by a bishop in continuous line of bishops back to apostles, and who is in communion with whole order of bishops.

Lutheran understanding: succession of the Gospel through the church guaranteed by the Holy Spirit at ordination of pastors.
Noteworthy

• For Catholics, Vatican II was watershed experience for reform within church

• Tasks of Catholic and Lutheran officeholders correspond in many ways

• Agree that Role of Ordained... servants

• (John 13:1-17)
  
  “Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call me Teacher and Lord... 14 So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.”
Vision for Future

• While Office of Ministry between Catholics and Lutherans differ, there are many similarities that offer hope for further consensus and change

  – That will remain rooted Baptismal call
    • Word and Sacrament
For Discussion

• Identify the differences you see in Pastors/Priests in the Lutheran vs. the Catholic Churches
  - What obstacles can be overcome to move us toward greater reconciliation?
  - What obstacles would remain?

• How do you see your ministry as a Child of God?
From Conflict to Communion: Scripture & Tradition

Discussion Leader: Stacy Reiss (St. James)
Luther's Understanding of Scripture as Ultimate Authority

- Other authorities (Pope, Church, etc.) only draw power from Scripture
- Scripture is THE witness to God’s Revelation. It must teach Christ.
- Used 3 step process to study Theology: prayer, meditation, and affliction (testing.)
- Luther spoke against human traditions that undermine the message of Scripture itself.
- He translated the Bible into German.
It’s Tradition!

- Changes in Catholic Church after the Reformation have transformed the relationship between Scripture and tradition so it is no longer as divisive.

- Apostolic traditions vs Church tradition
  - Notion of Trinity
  - 2 Natures of Christ
  - Purgatory
  - Papal Infallibility
Discussion

• Share some traditions that are important to you as a Catholic or Lutheran.

• Where there are different practices/views, discuss how can we learn about and appreciate the understanding of those traditions by the other? i.e. Purgatory, Veneration of Mary and the Saints, Treatment of the Eucharist (Intinction), Immaculate Conception of BVM, etc.
Differences in Scripture

Catholic Books of Bible (367 AD)

• Includes 7 additional Old Testament books from the Greek translation of Hebrew Bible (Septuagint)
• Several approved translations

Protestant Bibles - Luther Led

• No Authorized Version of Bible
• 66 Books: 39 Old Testament followed the Hebrew Bible.
• Apocrypha or Deuterocanonical books include Tobit, Judith, Baruch, Wisdom, Sirach, 1 and 2 Maccabees with some verses of Daniel and Esther.
• Luther and others questioned the Divine authority of Hebrews, James, 2 Peter, 2 & 3 John, Jude and Revelation
• Council of Trent (1545-63) Scriptural interpretation guided by teaching authority of the church. Concerned about doctrinal conclusions from private interpretations.

• Vatican II (1962-65) affirms church is not above Scripture and stands at its service. Encouraged faithful to read Scripture in which God speaks to them, accompanied by prayer.
Points of Convergence

• Common Creeds (Nicene and Apostles)
• We agree that Scripture is present in Catholic Church tradition.
• Lutherans appreciate Catholics’ understanding that Scripture is at work in the Church as a whole (not only in individuals)
• The areas of Scripture and tradition, are an example of our reconciled diversity.

From Conflict to Communion | Scripture & Tradition
Catholic/Lutheran Dialogue has emphasized the effectiveness of the Spirit inspired biblical text.

• Is the reading or study of Scripture a devotional practice of yours? How often or when do you read it? Do you use any guide when reading the Bible?

• How is the Holy Spirit working in guiding and enlightening you as you study Scripture and look at your traditions in the church?

• Do you think that the Holy Spirit can guide Lutherans and Catholics to continue to find unity amidst diversity? How?